Post-Capitalism: The End of Money

Metatrend #1: Abundance: Energy, Education & Food

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What happens when superintelligence, humanoid robotics, and nanotechnology drive production costs toward zero, eroding profit motives? This is a topic discussed in *The Zero Marginal Cost Society* by Jeremy Rifkin. The implications are stunning, what might be called a “post-capitalist society.”

In this future, Abundance replaces scarcity, and networks of “prosumers” collaborate in a sharing economy. Power shifts from corporations to distributed, peer-to-peer commons: where access, sustainability, and collective well-being supersede ownership and market competition.

Let’s dig in – while this may sound like science fiction, it is a very real future implication. The question is *when*... here’s what that looks like, and what it means for you:

1/ Post-capitalism: when money stops mattering

When exponential technologies converge, the cost of producing anything drops to *near zero*. We’ve seen this over and over again with digital photography, search, and now genAI. So what’s coming in a decade’s time (at least according to Ray Kurzweil and me)?

The thought experiment: Imagine molecular assemblers (according to the work of Eric Drexler, author of *Engines of Creation*), nanotechnology that rearranges atoms. I drop an assembler onto the ground and tell it to build me an electric Ferrari. It pulls atoms from the environment, uses freely available energy (fusion, solar, SMRs), and builds the car atom by atom. The Ferrari materializes.

Everything reduces to four costs: raw materials (minimal), energy (effectively free), information (free if open source), and manufacturing capital costs (near zero with nanotech and large scale robotics). As Jeremy Rifkin writes: “Extreme productivity and collaborative commons will combine to lower the cost of producing goods and services to near zero, making them nearly free, abundant, and no longer subject to market forces.”

2/ After money: what becomes valuable in Abundance

In a world where anyone can build anything, what remains scarce? In Abundance, scarcity shifts to things that can’t be replicated: experiences, creativity, meaning, access to what’s genuinely limited. The *Star Trek* analogy: everyone has replicators that produce physical goods at zero cost, but not everyone gets to travel between stars.

When anyone can live like a king, the question becomes: **What is human progress?**

The shift moves from “work for income” to “work (or effort) for personal fulfillment.”

What’s scarce in this world? Time. Attention. Genuine human connection. Creative achievement. Status in communities you care about. The work itself becomes the reward.

This unlocks massive creativity and eliminates hunger and disease. But it also forces us to reckon with identity in a post-work world.

3/ My Advice (not investment advice): we’re heading to a post-capitalist society in the long run, but the interim period could be very messy.

The petrodollar has shifted. The energy equation is transforming. We’re questioning what money even *is* in a world of infinite Abundance.

Here’s how to position yourself:

- **Own the means of production.** In this transition, whoever controls AI agents, robotics, 3D printers (eventually nanotech), and energy infrastructure has leverage. Don't just be a consumer of Abundance—be a builder of it.

- **Develop non-replicable skills.** Build relationships. Create original ideas. Navigate ambiguity. Lead through chaos. These remain valuable as everything else demonetizes.
- **Prepare psychologically for post-scarcity.** The hardest part won't be material Abundance… it'll be finding meaning when basic needs are solved. Start asking now: What would you do if money were irrelevant? That answer is your North Star. What is your version of *Star Trek*?

The winners in this transition will be those who see Abundance coming and position themselves accordingly.